

Message Text

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64

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 /052 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE 6823

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

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COMUSMACTHAI BANGKOK TH

UNCLAS BANGKOK 14242

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, MILI, TH

SUBJ: PRESS SUMMARY: CONTINUING THAI-U.S. MUTUAL SECURITY
ACTIVITIES

USIA PASS IEA, IOP/M, IBS, IPS

1. BANGKOK PRESS CONTINUES MAY 19 HAVY PLAY AND EDITORIAL COMMENT
ON U.S. PROPOSALS REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF CONTINUING THAI-
U.S. MUTUAL SECURITY ACTIVITIES.

2. NEWS ACCOUNTS STEMMING FROM FOREIGN MINISTER PHICHAIRAT RATTAKUN'S
REMARKS TO REPORTERS MAY 18 LEAVE IMPRESSION THAT THE NOTE FROM
THE U.S. EMBASSY MAY 17 PROPOSED TO GIVE CERTAIN ELECTRONICS
EQUIPMENT TO THAILAND AND LEAVE SOME U.S. TECHNICIANS HERE TO
TRAIN THAIS TO USE THE EQUIPMENT.

3. SEVERAL REPORTS POINT OUT THAT JULY 20 DEADLINE FOR THE U.S.
MILITARY WITHDRAWAL REMAINS IN EFFECT. ENGLISH-LANGUAGE THE
NATION QUOTES A SOURCE DESCRIBED AS A HIGH-RANKING GOVERNMENT
OFFICIAL: "AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED, THE CLOCK TICKS ON."

4. NATIONAL ALSO ATTRIBUTES TO "INFORMED SOURCES" A VIEW THAT
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THE U.S. NOTE "WAS TWISTED TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT THE AMERICAN

OFFER WAS IN RESPONSE TO THE THAI GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST"
WHILE IT WAS THE U.S. AMBASSADOR "WHO HAD SOUGHT A MEETING WITH
FOREIGN MINISTER PHICHAJ TO INITIATE RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS."

5. FORMER PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOJ TOLD A NEWSMAN THAT
"NOISY RIGHTISTS WHO ARE NOW OPPOSING THE AMERICAN WITHDRAWAL
ARE PLAIN SHORT-SIGHTED." HE SAID IT WAS "SHEER FOLLY TO GO
ON BELIEVING AN AMERICAN PRESENCE WILL LESSEN THE COMMUNIST
THREAT."

6. NATION EDITORIAL CALLS FOR GOVERNMENT TO REVEAL DETAILS
OF THE U.S. PROPOSAL. "WHAT EXACTLY DO THE AMERICANS
WANT?" THE EDITORIAL ASKS. "THE GOVERNMENT MUST MAKE THIS
CLEAR TO THE PUBLIC." IT CONTINUES: "THE KHUKRIT GOVERNMENT
HAD THE BACKING OF THE PUBLIC WHEN IT IMPOSED TO SEVEN
CONDITIONS ON THE AMERICAN PRESENCE, LEADING TO THE
WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE ON JULY 20. NOW THE DEMOCRATS APPEAR TO
BE FOLLOWING A SOFTER APPROACH ON THE ISSUE. THIS COALITION
SHOULD BE WARNED THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO ALLOW THE UNITED STATES
TO CIRCUMVENT THE KHUKRIT GOVERNMENT CONDITIONS WOULD BE
DANGEROUS. IT WOULD CREATE SUSPICION, AND THE POLICY OF
THIS AND THE LAST GOVERNMENTS IS TO GET RID OF THAT SUSPICION
AND DOUBT IN RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES."

7. BANGKOK POST EDITORIAL VIEWS LINES OF CONFLICT FORMING
BETWEEN GROUPS SUPPORTING CONTINUED AMERICAN PRESENCE AND
THOSE OPPOSING IT. IT SAYS THE RTG "CANNOT RENEGE ON ITS
RESPONSIBILITIES BY SUBMITTING TO THE DEMANDS OF ANY PRESSURE
GROUPS. IT HAS TO LOOK AT EACH MAJOR ISSUE, INCLUDING THAT
OF THE AMERICAN FACILITIES, IN THE LIGHT OF THE LONG-TERM
NATIONAL INTEREST AND MAKE ITS DECISION AFTER WEIGHING ALL
FACTORS INVOLVED AND CONSIDERING ALL OPINIONS." THE WRITER
POINTS OUT THAT "THE PRIME MINISTER WHO PRECIPITATED THE AMERICAN
WITHDRAWAL WAS VOTED OUT OF OFFICE, AND THE LEFTIST PARTIES
WHICH HAD CALLED FOR TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF THE AMERICANS AND
FOR THE ABROGATION OF THE ANTI-COMMUNIST ACT WERE ALMOST TOTALLY
REJECTED BY THE PEOPLE."

WHITEHOUSE

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